

December 3, 1976

REPORT TO THE CONVENTION
By
THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE

The undersigned, members of a special committee, have carefully reviewed eleven sets of comments on the draft Constitution of November 14, 1976. Each of these eleven submissions was very thoughtful and displayed the correspondent's thorough study of the draft Constitution. The special committee considered suggestions offered by the Resident Commissioner;

S. Yoma, director of public affairs for the Trust Territory Government; Felicidad Roger N. Ludwick; Senator Herman R. Guerrero; Jack Layne, acting attorney general of the Northern Mariana Islands; A. C. Tenorio, director of public works in the Northern Mariana Islands government; Juan A. Sablan, acting deputy high commissioner of the Trust Territory; the United Carolinian Association; Felicidad T. Ogumoro; Joaquin I. Pangelinan; and Reynaldo O. Yana.

The views of these correspondents fell, for the most part, into one of four general categories. Many of the criticisms of the November 14 draft have been cured in the Constitution as approved by the Convention on final reading. Many of those submitting comments for example, were concerned over the size and expense of a thirty-nine member legislature. Another correspondent was disturbed that the article on personal rights included a guarantee of a militia. The United Carolinian Association observed that the draft Constitution made no provision for the representation of Carolinians in the new Commonwealth government. The Constitution also now protects the island of Maug. The Constitution as revised takes account of these objections.

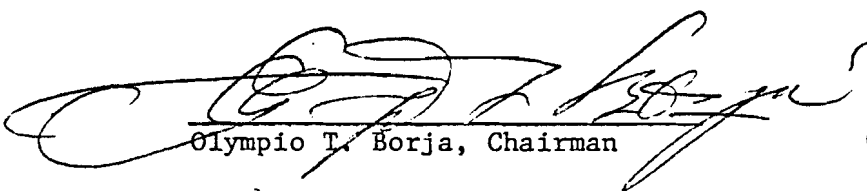
A few of these eleven letters included the criticism that the language of the Constitution was unclear. One correspondent voiced unease over the scope of the protection of juvenile defendants in criminal cases. This second type of concern is remedied by the section-by-section analysis.

Third, some of the comments were directed to decisions of public policy reached by the Convention after long and painstaking deliberation. Several correspondents, for example, expressed distaste for the provisions on the alienation of land. The special committee recognizes the sincerity of such views, but believes that no useful purpose would be served by reconsidering topics already resolved by the Convention.


Fourth, a very few letters urged that the Convention adopt provisions that would be in violation of the Constitution of the United States. One individual urged the inclusion of language requiring certain public officials to have been born in the Northern Mariana Islands. The special committee strongly disfavors the adoption of any unconstitutional provision.

The special committee commends each of the eleven correspondents for taking the time to assist the Convention in its important work. The committee welcomes the continued interest of these Marianas residents in the progress of the Constitution.

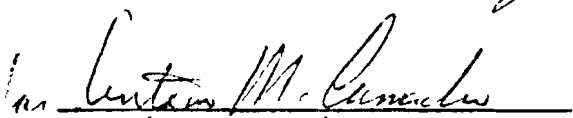
Respectfully submitted,



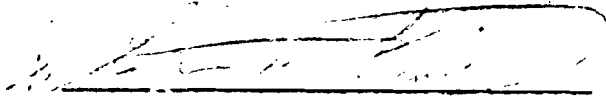
Olympio T. Borja, Chairman



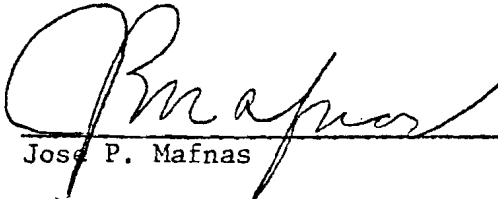
Gregorio Calvo



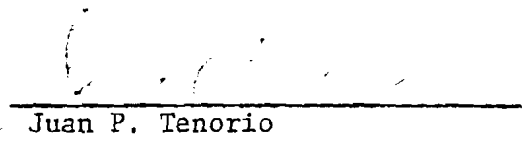
Benigno R. Fitial



Benjamin T. Manglona


Jose P. Mafnas

Joaquin S. Torres


Juan P. Tenorio

Ramon G. Villagomez